

May 25, 2012

To: Executive Board

Subject: **General Marketing Services Contract Award**

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### Recommendation

Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate final contract terms and conditions and award a contract in the amount of \$931,422.00 to Pulsar Advertising for general marketing services. The contract will be on a time and materials basis with a base term of three years beginning on July 1, 2012 and ending on June 30, 2015. The contract will include two one-year options to be exercised at Foothill Transit's sole discretion.

### Analysis

On January 18, 2012, the Executive Board authorized the Executive Director to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) No. 12-038 for General Marketing Services.

The RFP was issued on March 6, 2012. On March 27, two proposals were received. The evaluation committee, consisting of three members of the administrative team, reviewed the proposals independently. Both proposers were invited to an oral interview at which time they were allowed to elaborate on their proposals and respond to questions from the evaluation committee.

At the conclusion of the oral interviews, the evaluation team submitted their individual scores for each proposer. Those scores are summarized below:

Evaluation Factors	Maximum Score	GMR, LLC	Pulsar
1. Experience And Qualifications	40	29.07	38.67
2. Work Plan and Technical Approach	30	21.80	28.50
3. Management Structure and Key Personnel	15	10.90	14.25
<b>Total Technical Score</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>61.77</b>	<b>81.42</b>
<b>Price Score</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>5.95</b>
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>76.77</b>	<b>87.37</b>

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As indicated in the scoring summary, Pulsar Advertising was ranked highest by the evaluation team. Among the key strengths of the Pulsar proposal were familiarity with public transportation needs, extensive traditional and new media marketing experience, a highly experienced graphic design team, strong industry and market research connections and direct marketing expertise. Under this contract, Pulsar Advertising will develop marketing programs for five basic areas and all campaigns will be designed to collectively build on Foothill Transit's brand image, with the ultimate goal of increasing ridership. The areas of work include:

- General Marketing Programs
- 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Customer Promotion
- Website Upgrades
- Customer Surveys
- Social Media Marketing

Pulsar Advertising has worked extensively with Foothill Transit over the past 16 years and has developed the award winning E Bus Book and the agency's new social media campaign and Foothill Connections. They have broad experience with several transit agencies across the state, including Metrolink, AC Transit, Big Blue Bus, and BART.

**Attachment A** is the Scope of Work for the Marketing Services Agreement.

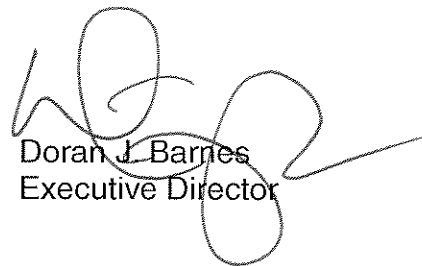
**Budget Impact**

Funding for a new marketing services contract is programmed into Foothill Transit's approved FY 2013 Business Plan.

Sincerely,



Rashidi Barnes  
Director of Procurement



Doran J. Barnes  
Executive Director

Attachment

# **Exhibit A**

## **Marketing Scope of Work**

The selected marketing/advertising agency will be asked to develop a strategic marketing plan that will complement Foothill Transit's business plan initiatives. Though different products and services will be outlined, they should always be designed to collectively build on Foothill Transit's brand image and increase ridership.

### **General Marketing Program**

The general marketing program is designed to increase overall awareness of Foothill Transit's brand identity throughout its service area. This program will involve a continuation of current themes refined to reach selected target markets. The agency will expand the current creative concepts and design artwork to target these markets. Specific marketing campaigns will be developed to keep the program fresh and responsive. Advertising media may include, but is not limited to newspapers, direct mail, online ads and cable television. Media buying services will be provided by the agency for specific campaigns, but Foothill Transit will pay the media outlets directly.

### **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Foothill Transit will mark its 25<sup>th</sup> year of service in 2013. The chosen agency will develop a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary campaign with logo and theme that will be incorporated into a variety of mixed-media materials. The Anniversary milestone will be acknowledged within the organization, to stakeholder groups (elected officials, general public), and through a variety of customer-centric promotions. The selected agency will be tapped for creative suggestions for cost-effective promotions

### **Website Upgrades**

The current Foothill Transit website was overhauled in 2009 and contains many state-of-the-art features including an interactive system map, trip-cost calculator, e-bus book and e-alert capabilities.

As additional upgrades take place, the selected agency will be responsible for refreshing the look of the website and working with the website vendor on integrating consistent design layout for any further additions (see social media below).

### **Customer Surveys**

Foothill Transit will conduct periodic customer satisfaction surveys to use as an indication of where customer service improvements are necessary and to define the Foothill Transit customer. The selected agency will work with the chosen research

consultants and Foothill Transit staff to incorporate questions that will provide the data needed (but will not be required to conduct any surveys). It will require oversight and input from the advertising agency to get the most out of the data, which will be collected by a research company.

## **Social Media Marketing**

During the course of the contract there are specific web-based and social media activities that will be conducted on behalf of Foothill Transit. In addition the selected agency is to provide specialized web-based and smartphone compatible social media services to Foothill Transit which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide recommendations for Foothill Transit's websites and current social media pages to build recognition, traffic, and reach, and to increase understanding of the agency's services and programs in conjunction with Foothill Transit's marketing and customer communications objectives
  - Advise and implement improved integration between various technologies
  - Identify and implement new social media technologies
  - Review and revise all new media endeavors to work concurrently into one unified online communications package  
(New media is generically defined as, but is not limited to Foothill Transit's website, Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, website, YouTube channel, and Flickr page. It also includes social media technologies not currently employed by Foothill Transit.)
- Research, recommend and implement appropriate social media and interactive technology applications that will effectively advance Foothill Transit's marketing and communications objectives,
  - Special focus should be given to Foursquare, Pinterest, and any emerging social media tool that expands Foothill Transit's reach within the service area
  - The investigation and strategic implementation of seeding Foothill Transit information on news aggregators such as but not limited to Technorati, Stumble Upon, and Reddit should be included
- Provide recommendations and strategies for content development that improves the effectiveness of agency communications in a social media environment and educates appropriate staff on how to develop and evolve this content
  - Research and strategize targeting content towards key audiences such as but not limited to veterans, tourists, the elderly, and students – both k-12 and college.
  - Research, define, and strategize social media outreach to minority communities as defined by Title VI regulations governed by the Federal Transit Administration and work with agency staff to ensure compliance

- Develop and/or edit creative and technical content for all Foothill Transit social media pages
  - Work with Foothill Transit staff and contractors to streamline creation and implementation of new technologies, apps, and add-ons to Foothill transit's online communications platforms

## Specific Tasks

- Develop a strategic marketing plan
  - Provide quarterly updates to Foothill Transit and make recommendations for enhancements and refinements
- Create a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary marketing campaign
- Provide a one-year plan for web page improvements and activities, to be revised and updated quarterly;
- Customer Survey Support
- Provide web and social media guidance, recommendations and tools that span one or more of the six building blocks of social media as appropriate, which are:
  - search (including SEO/SEM/SMM; RSS and other distribution technology)
  - blogging and microblogging
  - social networking
  - e-community development
  - and user-generated content
  - Continue to implement the Foothill Transit brand throughout the website and social media platforms, providing web page frames, banners graphics, photos and content as requested